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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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10/723,715

11/25/2003

Tetsuya Ishikawa

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FRISHAUF, HOLTZ, GOODMAN & CHICK, PC  
220 Fifth Avenue  
16TH Floor  
NEW YORK, NY 10001-7708

EXAMINER

PHAM, THIERRY L

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2625

MAIL DATE

DELIVERY MODE

09/30/2008

PAPER

**Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.**

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	<b>Application No.</b> 10/723,715	<b>Applicant(s)</b> ISHIKAWA ET AL.	
	<b>Examiner</b> THIERRY L. PHAM	<b>Art Unit</b> 2625	

**-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --**

**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 15 July 2008.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**.                      2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 14-17 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 14-17 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All    b) ☐ Some \*    c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

**Attachment(s)**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)          | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)           |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____                                      |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)          | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____  | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____                          |

### **DETAILED ACTION**

- This action is responsive to the following communication: RCE filed on 7/15/2008.
- Claims 14-17 are currently pending; claims 1-13 have been canceled.

#### ***Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114***

A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 7/15/2008 has been entered.

#### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 14-17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tanaka (US 20020003897), and in view of Watanabe (JP-2001014123).

Regarding claims 14 & 16, Tanaka discloses a system (image processing system, figs. 16-17) comprising:

- an image-processing apparatus (digital copy machine 100, fig. 1) which is coupled to a network (communication interface 15 is implemented to connect to network 200 as shown in fig. 17), and each of which includes a rasterizer (rasterizer 9, fig. 1) to conduct a rasterizing operation for rasterizing image data that represents an image and for outputting the rasterized image data; and

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- an image-printing apparatus (printer 220, fig. 17) coupled to the network, which is coupled to an image-processing apparatus through the network, and which includes an image-forming section (inherently, printer 220 includes a print engine for forming images onto print media) which forms a reproduced image on a sheet, wherein an image-processing apparatus is capable of performing the rasterizing operation (rasterizer 9, fig. 1) in response to a request by an second image-processing apparatus, and wherein image processing apparatus further includes a storage section (memory 13, fig. 1) to store image data.

However, Tanaka fails to teach and/or suggest an imaging system comprising plurality of image processing apparatuses, and wherein the plurality of image-processing apparatuses are divided into a plurality of groups, wherein each of the image-processing apparatuses included in one of the plurality of groups stores access restriction information representing a restricted range of an accessing right to access other image-processing apparatuses belonging to other groups. In other words, Tanaka's system only teaches a single copy machine 100 and a single printer 220 that are connected to the network rather than plurality of printers and copiers are connected to the network, and wherein these networked devices are divided into groups. Furthermore, Tanaka fails to teach and/or suggest a storage device for storing access restriction information.

Watanabe, in the same field of endeavor for printing, teaches a well-known example of a printing system (fig. 1) comprising plurality of image processing apparatuses (plurality of PCs, printers, fig. 1), and wherein the plurality of image-processing apparatuses are divided into a plurality of groups (e.g. Group A and Group B, fig. 4), wherein each of the image-processing apparatuses included in one of the plurality of groups stores ***access restriction information*** (access restriction information, par. 12 and par. 38-41) representing a restricted range of an accessing right (accessing right to networked devices such as printer 1, 2, pars. 38-41) to access other image-processing apparatuses belonging to other groups (groups, figs. 3-4).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention was made to divide printing system of Tanaka into plurality of groups and to includes access restriction information as taught by Watanabe because of a following

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reason: (●) to classify and/or separate printers into groups allows users/operators to identify the selected printers and/or group of printers more efficient; (●) improving security within network printing via using access restriction information (par. 33 of Watanabe).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to combine Tanaka with Watanabe to obtain the invention as specified in claim 14.

Regarding claim 15, Watanabe further teaches the system of claim 14, wherein the image-printing apparatus belongs to one of the plurality of groups, and the image-printing apparatus comprises a storage section to store the access restriction information (pars. 38-41) of the at least one image-processing apparatus belonging to the same group as the image-printing apparatus.

Regarding claim 17, Watanabe further teaches the system of claim 16, wherein the image-printing apparatus (fig. 1) belongs to one of the plurality of groups (plurality of groups, fig. 4).

### ***Response to Arguments***

Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 14-17 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

### ***Conclusion***

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to THIERRY L. PHAM whose telephone number is (571)272-7439. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F (9:30 AM - 6:00 PM).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Edward Coles can be reached on (571)272-7402. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Thierry L Pham/  
Art Unit 2625

/Dov Popovici/  
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 2625